

NORTH WEST LIGHTNING HOCKEY CLUB



Academy – JSC – HV teams

Strategic Plan 2024-2028

Mission

To be a leading hockey community recognised for providing the opportunity for all to develop as hockey players and individuals in an environment that is safe, welcoming and professional.

Vision

- To create pathways for aspiring players.
- To aspire to be a Premier League club.

Values

- **Inclusive:** We boast an inclusive club culture that fosters an environment where all members feel welcome and valued.
- **Integrity:** We believe that how we operate as a club is as important as the work we do, and the way we play.
- **Respectful:** Respect is the foundation upon which a culture of fair competition, camaraderie, and personal growth is built.
- **Passionate:** We love hockey; we love the people; we love the culture. We live it! We breathe it! We play it!

CLUB CULTURE: To enhance club culture and member participation

| We commit to... | Our actions.... |
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| Strengthen whole of club culture through more 'whole of club' communications, decision-making and operations. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of the name "North West Lightning" in all communications and opportunities • Produce club wide communications. • Seek outside & independent advice to be the best we can be. E.g. Good Sports, ClubMap, Regional Sports Assemblies, Consumer Affairs • Foster partnerships with clubs and associations within the Lightning zone that form part of the North West Lightning zone. • Form sub-committees which include members from Academy, Junior, Senior, JSC |
| Strengthen whole club culture through great behavioral standards. Promotion of an inclusive environment for all. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure strong leadership from the top re: maintaining behavioural standards. • Promote the 'Codes of Behaviour', to the point where all members can be relied upon to enforce our behavioral standards. • Promote good sportsmanship for players, spectators and parents. • Promote appropriate respect for umpires and officials. • Whenever necessary, stand up and let others know what is right/wrong. • Facilitate and promote inclusion, well-being and club culture activities |
| Establish an online profile for North West Lightning that features all aspects of the club, and is professional and respectful. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the Lightning website up to date with club activities. • Produce quality and consistent social media communication that shows a balance of playing group representation and supports HV initiatives. • Apply quality control for all social media posts. Ensure appropriate management of club social media including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External social media sites of Lightning webpage, Facebook & Instagram • Internal use of Team App, WhatsApp and Rev Sport only for messages to members |
| Increase whole club social opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create more whole club social opportunities. • Ensure the social calendar for the year is published prior to Round 1. • Special rounds across all aspects of the club as per Hockey Victoria guidelines |
| Respect the history prior to the amalgamated North West Lightning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honour life members and past committee members through invitation to key events and formal acknowledgement. |

PLAYER ENGAGEMENT: Enhance player retention, recruitment and re-engagement

| We commit to... | Our actions.... |
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| <p>Establish improved contracts and expectations of our coaches, improve succession plans and expand the use of 'assistant' coaches to enable development.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attract and develop coaching staff to meet whole club needs. • A transparent selection policy is in place that ensures players are selected on merit. • Support representative players at Vic and National levels • Determine the accredited coaches in the NWL linked associations for LEC data. • Increase the number of accredited and active coaches. • Introduce coach position advertising with a genuine 'why coach at Lightning' approach to attract the best coaches and motivate people to consider coaching hockey. |
| <p>Create a climate where hockey is enjoyable, and we retain members while attracting new members and reaching out to re-engage past members.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond promptly and enthusiastically to new membership enquiries. • Consciously reach out to past players/inactive members inviting them to return. • Create a database of past players and develop an Alumni. • Support whole family involvement at North West Lightning Hockey Club. • Ensure that the annual registration includes a section requesting players and junior parents to identify their occupation and general interest in helping NWL. • Research retention issues and follow up with non-returning players to seek feedback. • Consciously invite and support junior players in transition to playing senior hockey. • Maintain quality junior introduction and development programs. • Create an environment that encourages feedback. Establish member surveys for feedback purposes and create a register of potential improvement opportunities. • Improve our summer offerings – social hockey, indoor hockey • Develop a promotional package that highlights NWL's strengths and opportunities |
| <p>Establish a 'Mentor' program between junior and senior players of the club in the HV Competitions.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a 'Mentor' program which aligns each Senior squad member with a U16 or U18 player. • Improve the junior/senior interface, specifically ensuring that all junior being approached to play seniors are first 'connected' to a senior section mentor. • Create pathways for development for talented juniors. • Develop a program that addresses the emotional welfare of all players playing or considering playing senior hockey at NWL. |
| <p>Focus on the recruitment of junior members for all facets of the club.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm with HV how to include NWL linked associations data to meet LEC criteria. • Maintain and develop links with community groups and schools. • Promote junior opportunities for Academy, JSC and HV teams in all NWL linked associations. |

HOCKEY EDUCATION: Develop hockey players, officials and committee members at all levels

| We commit to... | Our actions.... |
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| <p>Develop leaders across all facets of the Club – administration, coaching, umpiring, technical officials, etc</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a budget allocation to cover training programs. • Identify and create leadership opportunities for junior players. • Promote HV/local government training/leadership opportunities. • Prioritise an annual ‘member skill audit’. Use it to help identify potential leaders. • Seek outside assistance to enhance the Board’s performance. • Produce a program which shows annual incremental increase in the number of players exposed to umpiring and technical officer development opportunities. |
| <p>Establish improved umpire, coaching and technical official programs & initiatives.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote Hockey Education opportunities to our members. • Increase Hockey Education qualifications across the club to invest in our members. • Increase the number of accredited umpires and tech officials. • Determine accredited officials in NWL linked associations to assist with LEC data. • Encourage senior players to assist with the HV Roadshow, Hookin2Hockey, academies and JSC to improve their coaching abilities and establish links with junior players. |
| <p>Offer a Development and Elite Academy programs for junior players.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a ‘Coach the Coach’ program, drawing on the expertise we have in house at North West Lightning to assist with running the Academy program at each venue. • Liaise with each association to run a Development Academy at each venue. • Continue to offer an Elite Junior Program with a State hockey coach to coach the identified talented juniors at U12-U21 level and to provide a pathway for their transition to State Academies and teams and to Senior hockey. |
| <p>Introduce succession plans, training and leadership identification. Increase awareness of compliance to ensure informed decisions and manage the administration of the club into the future.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to document processes, roles & responsibilities, enable a fostering of people to learn about the requirements of Committees and identify people with the skills & attributes to best represent our club. • Continue to improve the Governance of the Club by providing training. • Ensure all policies are up to date and on the website. • Review the Strategic Plan annually. Issue a new version as required and review the date annually. |
| <p>Maximise the number of teams playing and provide quality facilities and equipment.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain team entries that cater for the needs of all members of the club. • Provide equity of training space and time, equipment and specialist coaches. |

VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT: Foster partnerships with key stakeholders & enhance participation

| We commit to... | Our actions.... |
|---|--|
| <p>To develop a vibrant, welcoming club where our members feel connected, and their contributions are valued and celebrated.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create volunteer role descriptions. • Add skill listing at registration to assist with skill recognition. • Encourage all players to identify areas they can assist the club when registering. • Highlight successes to the whole club via social media. • Embed a positive social environment with cohesion across all playing groups and levels. |
| <p>Celebrate volunteers and build a culture where our members appreciate that it is through input you get more out of your club experience.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the 50 jobs chart annually. • Identify the subcommittees requiring members from each sector of the club. • Thank volunteers appropriately. • Provide appropriate induction and ongoing support of volunteers new to a role. |
| <p>Make it desirable to learn how to become a great player, coach, umpire, administrator.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find role models amongst our members/volunteers and promote them across the club. • Establish leaders within each key club section. i.e. appoint a designated umpiring coordinator, junior coaching coordinator, tech officials, etc. |
| <p>Recognise and promote the importance of our volunteers.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify role models amongst the current leaders of our Club people doing a lot of work/people doing a small singular task. • Develop and implement a Volunteer Recognition Program. • Highlight a volunteer in each newsletter. • Create a 'jobs vacancy list' and display it through various methods. • Host training and promote the availability of support. |
| <p>Find new ways to broaden membership/volunteer base</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the benefits of being a social member (include junior players' parents). • Develop an initiative to sign up social members. • Establish broad-based sub-committees to help with the administration of each portfolio. |

CLUB SUSTAINABILITY: Continued financial strength, good governance, and sustainability

| We commit to... | Our actions.... |
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| Apply effective governance and management practices consistent with the North West Lightning Hockey Club Inc constitution, Hockey Victoria LEC requirements, Consumer Affairs Victoria, Australian Taxation requirements and all other areas of compliance. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish portfolios of management and empower people in those roles. • Audit the Executive Committee to ensure breadth in skill sets and expertise. • Refine & document Executive Committee practices to maximise operational efficiency. • Ensure all roles on the Executive Committee have clearly defined Position Descriptions. • Executive Committee members must adhere to the Lightning Values. • Establish clear handover requirements expected of Executive Committee Members. • Increase use of technology to improve club administration. • Implement HA, HV and NWL Policies and update as required on NWL website. |
| Develop North West Lightning's Financial Management Policy and processes to ensure a secure and sustainable financial base. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a Finance Subcommittee that discusses financing, grants, and loans and provides guidance to the Executive Committee. • Maintain and grow alternate funding sources. • Increase sponsorship through promotion of the club and maximise grant opportunities. • Look at signage at grounds, online promotion and other ways to provide potential sponsors with a real opportunity to receive advising space and return on their investment. • Continue player sponsorships. • Establish a North West Lightning Business Register. • Create a North West Lightning Financial Management Policy. |
| Move towards sustainable profits. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce a plan that suggests areas in which we can cut costs and develop more/improve existing income generating areas. • Streamline club operations where possible. E.g. Sharing of equipment across all sections. • Investigate the potential for developing a coterie group, a not-for-profit foundation, and a direct debit contribution scheme. • Produce a plan that looks at ways to enhance the sponsorship program, and fundraising initiatives. • Seek budget information prior to all social events that indicates a profit to be made at each event. |

| Version Name | Version | Date | Summary |
|------------------------------|---------|--------------|---|
| NWL Strategic Plan 2024-2028 | 1.0 | January 2024 | Strategic Plan to reflect the changing environment of our club, HV, HA and other factors. |